

are operating and providing us with affordable, reliable energy. But the best kept secret of all is that FERC is absolutely key to achieving our clean energy goals and a zero carbon economy.

For the last few decades, FERC's biggest push has been to encourage competition in the power sector. FERC Order 888, which just celebrated its 25th birthday a few months ago, may not have cracked the Billboard Top 100, but it has been almost singularly responsible for decarbonizing our electric sector. The order, like most things FERC-related, was, frankly, pretty wonky. But by incentivizing lower-cost gas, nuclear, and renewable energy, it drove the private sector to drastically lower their greenhouse gas emissions and slash electricity costs.

From the perspective of anyone who pays for electricity, that is fantastic news. You pay less for cleaner power.

From the perspective of someone who cares about climate change, it is also amazing because once a clean energy plant is built, you don't need to pay the wind to blow or the Sun to shine. Clean energy is the cheapest source of energy out there, and those old, dirty plants just can't compete.

In my home State of Illinois, a recent study found that it would be cheaper to sell a coal plant that was just built a decade ago for scrap and procure cleaner replacement power through those FERC-organized markets. Thank you, FERC.

To kick off "Hot FERC Summer," I have introduced bills that will help FERC build on this success. The first of these was the Interregional Transmission Planning Improvement Act, which I introduced with Senator HEINRICH, that will ensure that our grid operators are thinking properly about the benefits of building transmission wires across the country.

The second, the Energy PRICE Act, which I introduced just today with Representatives LEVIN, HUFFMAN, and BONAMICI, would help ensure that FERC lives up to its legal responsibility to protect the public welfare by not approving electricity rates that don't account for the cost of greenhouse gas emissions.

I will be dropping a third "Hot FERC Summer" bill—I am sorry, a third hot jam next week.

But right now, FERC is at a crossroads. For the first time in years, President Biden has an opportunity to create a Democratic majority at FERC; a majority that will ensure that these incentives are in place to build an electric grid for our 21st century economy; a majority that will ensure that State renewable energy rules are respected and integrated into regional markets, a majority that will ensure that uneconomic fossil fuel plants are subjected to the competitive pressures of a free market that have given us an explosion in solar and wind energy over the past decade; a majority that will ensure that we make further progress in our clean energy goals rather than trying to fight against it.

But in order to do any of that in time to prevent more climate devastation, the President must nominate a Commissioner to FERC, and the Senate must confirm that individual. I urge both to do so as soon as possible to ensure that FERC stays at its full power and that it will be able to continue to be the most important clean energy agency that most of us have never heard of.

As you, of course know, Madam Speaker, "Hot Girl Summer" ain't about degrees, but "Hot FERC Summer" most definitely is. The record temperatures from Portland to Death Valley, the wildfires, and the coming hurricane season are all the direct result of our failure to decarbonize as quickly as we must.

While this summer is the hottest FERC summer yet, it is coming on the heels of 2020, which was the hottest summer North America has ever seen for as long as we have records. In point of fact, the 10 warmest summers on record have occurred since 1998. If we fail to act, they will be nothing compared to the summers we will experience over the coming decades because while the best chance to take action on climate was 30 years ago, the last chance is now.

EMPOWERING THE FREE MARKET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEHLS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEHLS. Madam Speaker, the Consumer Price Index rose 5.4 percent in the last year, the highest inflation in 13 years.

Americans are paying more for nearly everything. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the price of milk is up 5.6 percent; the price of fruit is up 7.3 percent; and the price of gas is up a whopping 45 percent.

Americans are paying more for goods and services because of the Democrats' out-of-control spending. Despite the dire economic state Democrats' reckless spending has put us in, they are now trying to ram through a partisan \$3.5 trillion package that will raise taxes on the middle class and job creators.

What are Democrats telling American businesses to do when they are going to raise taxes and impose regulations on them as they try to rebuild in the aftermath of a pandemic? They are telling them to take their business overseas.

To bounce back from the Biden administration's dismal job reports in consecutive months, we need to be stimulating economic opportunity and growth with less taxes and less regulation. Doing so will help spur the creation of good-paying jobs that encourage people to get back in the workforce.

What won't fix it is continuing to throw money at the economy, which seems to be all the Washington swamp knows how to do. The Democrats' lib-

eral tax-and-spend model is failing our economy and failing the American people.

We are not going to spend our way out of this mess with trillion-dollar programs that do nothing but serve liberal special interests. We do it by letting the free market flourish through lower taxes, lower regulation, and more economic freedom.

It worked under President Trump when he set records in unemployment, and it will work again if only the Federal Government would get out of the way and empower the people and the free market.

GETTING VACCINATED TO PROTECT OUR FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Mrs. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I rise today as COVID cases surge in my home State of Nevada and across this country.

In fact, in the past 3 days, Nevada has added over 2,000 new cases, and our 2-week positivity rate has rapidly grown to more than 12 percent. Hospitalizations are up, too, with the vast majority being among, you guessed it, the unvaccinated.

Unfortunately, just over half of Nevadans are fully or partially vaccinated. We must all do our part to end this pandemic. The best thing you can do to protect yourself, your family, the ones you care about most is to get vaccinated.

Getting your vaccine is safe and, now, easier than ever. Believe it or not, back home in Nevada, it comes with the chance to win more than \$5 million in prizes. That is how desperate we are to make sure that everyone is motivated to go get a vaccine.

Please, go to vaccines.gov to find a clinic. For those who are already vaccinated, please take the time this week to reach out and encourage your peers to do their part, too.

Together, we can stop the spread and get our lives back to normal.

REPORTING ON MISSING BLACK CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, this first speech that I am going to give today is, as we used to say in church, something that the Lord spoke on my heart. He speaks to me, just not in an audible voice. This is something that has kind of been a burden with me for quite some time.

Madam Speaker, today, I rise to express my great concern for the disproportionate number of missing Black children in our country and the way they are treated by our national media.

Every child is precious, Madam Speaker, and it is a tragedy whenever a